

CLAIMS

The Listing of Claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the subject application.

1. (Currently amended) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising ~~the steps of~~:

placing the device into a container;

cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;

rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;

vaporizing a liquid substance in the container to create a sterilant vapor; and

contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.

2. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 further comprising storing the device in the container in sterile form.

3. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein the liquid substance comprises a retained portion of the rinse solution.

4. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

5. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 4 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

6. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein the liquid substance comprises a chemical sterilant.
7. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 6 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.
8. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 and further comprising introducing the liquid substance as a mist.
9. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising retaining a predetermined amount of the liquid substance in the container prior to the vaporizing.
10. (New) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising:
 - placing the device into a container;
 - cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;
 - rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;
 - retaining a predetermined amount of a liquid substance in the container;
 - vaporizing the liquid substance in the container to create a vapor; and
 - contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.
11. (New) The method according to claim 10 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

12. (New) The method according to claim 11 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.
13. (New) The method according to claim 10 wherein the liquid substance comprises a chemical sterilant.
14. (New) The method according to claim 13 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.
15. (New) A method for cleaning and sterilizing a medical device comprising:
 - placing the device into a container;
 - cleaning the device in the container with a cleaning solution;
 - rinsing the device in the container with a rinse solution;
 - treating the device in the container with a liquid substance comprising a chemical sterilant, wherein a predetermined amount of the liquid substance is retained in the container;
 - vaporizing the liquid substance in the container to create a sterilant vapor; and
 - contacting the device with the vapor to effect sterilization of the device.
16. (New) The method according to claim 15 wherein the chemical sterilant comprises hydrogen peroxide.

17. (New) The method according to claim 15 wherein the rinse solution comprises a chemical sterilant.

18. (New) The method according to claim 17 wherein the chemical sterilant of the rinse solution comprises hydrogen peroxide.